

APPROVED FOR RELEASE: 2007/02/09: CIA-RDP82-00850R000100060056-3

27

1 of 1

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

JPRS L/8545

27 June 1979

TRANSLATIONS ON NEAR EAST AND NORTH AFRICA  
(FOUO 27/79)

NEAR  
EAST

NORTH  
AFRICA

U. S. JOINT PUBLICATIONS RESEARCH SERVICE

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

NOTE

JPRS publications contain information primarily from foreign newspapers, periodicals and books, but also from news agency transmissions and broadcasts. Materials from foreign-language sources are translated; those from English-language sources are transcribed or reprinted, with the original phrasing and other characteristics retained.

Headlines, editorial reports, and material enclosed in brackets [] are supplied by JPRS. Processing indicators such as [Text] or [Excerpt] in the first line of each item, or following the last line of a brief, indicate how the original information was processed. Where no processing indicator is given, the information was summarized or extracted.

Unfamiliar names rendered phonetically or transliterated are enclosed in parentheses. Words or names preceded by a question mark and enclosed in parentheses were not clear in the original but have been supplied as appropriate in context. Other unattributed parenthetical notes within the body of an item originate with the source. Times within items are as given by source.

The contents of this publication in no way represent the policies, views or attitudes of the U.S. Government.

COPYRIGHT LAWS AND REGULATIONS GOVERNING OWNERSHIP OF  
MATERIALS REPRODUCED HEREIN REQUIRE THAT DISSEMINATION  
OF THIS PUBLICATION BE RESTRICTED FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

JPRS L/8545

27 June 1979

## TRANSLATIONS ON NEAR EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

(FOUO 27/79)

### CONTENTS

PAGE

#### INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

PLO's al-Hut Visit to United States Causes Controversy (AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI, 27 Apr-3 May 79) .....	1
Al-Hut Discusses Visit, Shafiq al-Hut Interview Organizations Protest Restrictions	

#### ALGERIA

Agreement for Exploitation of Gara-Djebilet Iron Mines Signed (MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS, 27 Apr 79)....	10
Briefs	12
Price Supports	12
Disastrous Flooding	12
Algerian-Romanian Cooperation	12
Algerian-GDR Cooperation	13
Algerian-Cuban Cooperation	13
President Bendjedid on Production	13
Food Production Goals	13
Spanish-Algerian Economic Cooperation	14
Food Self-Sufficiency Goal	14
Decentralization	14
Need for Vocational Schools	15

#### IRAN

Ties With France Become Strained (Michel Gurfinkiel; VALEURS ACTUELLES, 21 May 79)...	16
--	----

#### MAURITANIA

Uncertain Whether New Government Can Meet Challenges (Abdelaziz Dahmani; JEUNE AFRIQUE, 18 Apr 79) .....	18
---	----

- a -

[III - NE & A - 121 FOUO]

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

	Page
CONTENTS (Continued)	
SAUDI ARABIA	
Briefs	20
French Service Equipment	
SULTANATE OF OMAN	
Alleged Egyptian Troop Presence Analyzed (AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI, 20-26 Apr 79) .....	21
SYRIA	
Government Wary of Israeli, Lebanese Surprise Moves ('Isam Khayr-al-Din; AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI, 27 Apr- 3 May 79) .....	24

- b -

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

INTER-ARAB AFFAIRS

PLO'S AL-HUT VISIT TO UNITED STATES CAUSES CONTROVERSY

Al-Hut Discusses Visit

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 27 Apr-3 May 79 pp 32-34

/Interview with Shafiq al-Hut, head of the PLO Office in Beirut, by Faruq Abu Zahr: "A Silent Visit Which Stirred Up Zionists in Paris," date not given/

/Text/ PLO's al-Hut's 3-week visit to the United States stirred up much news and a political storm. The Senate questioned Secretary of State Cyrus Vance, and State Department spokesman Hodding Carter made more than four statements. The White House and the press received thousands of letters and telegrams from the PLO's friends and enemies. The Israeli Embassy officials protested granted al-Hut a visa. Begin personally wrote officials in Washington expressing his surprise at their position. Arabs and Palestinians residing in the United States supported the visit and protested restrictions on the PLO delegate, denying him access to the people, television and the press.

A great deal has been written about the visit, however, all is imaginary and analytical since the U.S. administration prevented direct contact between al-Hut and the press, and declared that publishing anything attributed to the visitor might cause curtailment of his visit, asking him to leave the country and denying him the right to come to the United States again.

On his way to Beirut, al-Hut came to Paris. It was natural to meet with him as a colleague and as a political fighter for Palestine since the early 60s, to interview him in order to disclose the circumstances which surrounded his visit and his impressions of the latest developments of the U.S. position on the Palestinian question since the signing of the Sadat-Begin treaty under U.S. auspices.

/Question/ How did it all start, and what was the purpose of your visit?

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

[Answer] It all started last November when Columbia University invited the Israeli, Ahron Yariv, to speak at the Middle East Club concerning the Israeli-Arab conflict. Professor Edward Said, a Palestinian and a member of the Palestinian National Council, protested to the club the fact that it does not invite speakers representing Arabs, especially Palestinians.

About a month ago, I received an invitation from Columbia to speak at the Club. Professor Said cabled me to accept, since a number of large universities such as Harvard, Princeton, Yale and others specializing in foreign affairs and the Middle East expressed an interest in inviting me to speak.

Following consultations with the PLO's leadership it was decided that we should accept. No Palestinian or PLO official had ever addressed such an audience.

I applied for a visa at the U.S. Embassy in Beirut. They delayed. I cabled Columbia and others of my inability to come, due to the embassy's attitude. It seems that the universities pressured the State Department, up to Cyrus Vance, who issued the order to grant me a visa on his own responsibility.

[Question] Was the visa restricted? Have you accepted such restrictions?

[Answer] I did not contact the American consul, my secretary did. When I got the passport, I noticed that the consul had written under the visa that it was granted to make a series of lectures and that any change in the type of visa or an attempt to extend it must be made by the Immigration Department in Washington. I did not pay much attention to this. However, upon arriving in New York I consulted a lawyer so as not to give the U.S. authorities any pretext due to my unfamiliarity with the law. The lawyer told me that the authorities could interpret the remark as they please. Accordingly, I should stick to my schedule, not to seek contact with the people, give a press conference or appear on television. Any additional invitations should be approved by the Department of State. This is what happened, scores of invitations were received, which must have annoyed the State Department.

[Question] Were they able to meet with you?

[Answer] No, unfortunately, with one exception, due to the insistence of the editors of the magazine, FOREIGN POLICY, who usually invite the elite of commentators in Washington to have in-depth dialogues with political personalities. This irked the American press. In an editorial the next day, under the title, "The State's Small Secret," the WASHINGTON POST assailed the government's position on the freedom of speech and listening. This prompted a number of American newspapers and organizations to join in protests and denunciations, and some of them are contemplating bringing the matter to court.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Question Citing a variety of reasons, the press reported that you cancelled a lecture which was to be made in Chicago. What is the truth of the matter?

Answer When I arrived in New York, I learned that the Institute of Foreign Affairs at the University of Chicago wanted to invite me to speak on 17 April to a group of businessmen, professors and people interested in Middle East affairs, and that the State Department had approved it. However, I did not receive a written invitation until the day preceding the lecture. I also learned from Arab sources that due to the storm stirred up by my lectures at Columbia, Harvard, Princeton and Yale, the Chicago institution began to have second thoughts. Instead of apologizing, they resorted to a twisted means to force me to decline. Thus, they invited a group of high school teachers instead of the elite they usually invite to their lectures. When I was sure of this, I sent my regrets. However, due to the restrictions imposed upon me I could not disclose the facts at the time. This allowed some newspapers to claim that I did not go to Chicago due to the "Brussels airport incident," for which the PLO was falsely blamed. However, the fact is that I sent my regrets on Saturday, 14 April, while the Brussels incident was reported on Monday, 16 April.

Question Some circles tried, through the press, to give your visit a special political meaning, and interpreted the granting of your visa as indicating a new U.S. attitude toward the PLO. What do you think of this?

Answer This is a deliberate exaggeration aimed at distorting the real U.S. attitude. The fact is that no reasonable man can imagine that the mere granting of an entry visa to a Palestinian official with the abovementioned restrictions could be considered as a new or positive U.S. attitude. Should it be necessary to give it a political interpretation, it would have to be a negative one, since the mere granting of a visa is given such significance.

One should not give matters a greater significance than they actually have. The impression gained from my visit is that the United States is aware, more than at any time before, of the importance of the Palestinian element in the equation of war and peace in the region. This is especially true after the failure of its bets on an "alternative Palestinian leadership," due to the decisive and clear attitude of our people in the West Bank and the Gaza Strip. Nevertheless, the U.S. administration is still intransigent in its political position, and refuses to recognize the PLO before the organization accepts Resolution 242, which we shall not do, as a price for a mere dialogue with Washington.

Question The official Egyptian newspaper, AL-AHRAM, reported that your visit took place within a framework of U.S.-Palestinian contacts aiming at Palestinian participation in the coming negotiations.

Answer This is untrue, and it is in the framework of the Egyptian regime's wishful thinking and delusions. The PLO, backed by the Palestinian people, has rejected the Camp David accord and denounced the treaty signed by Sadat. Consequently, any talk of Palestine-U.S. contacts or any other contacts for the purpose of participating in the coming negotiations is false, untrue, and aims at distorting the PLO's clear and explicit position.



FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Question Did you learn this directly from U.S. administration officials? Did you have official contacts with the U.S. Government?

Answer No, I learned it, like any other person, from what was published in the press by State Department officials regarding my visit. I did not ask to meet with any administration official, nor did they ask to meet with me. My friend, former senator, James Abu Rizq, told me that five State Department officials expressed their regrets not to attend a dinner that he gave in my honor at his home. However, I met a number of senators and congressmen. I mention among them especially George McGovern, Paul Findley and Lee Hamilton. The three had visited our area and met Brother Abu Ammar. They are among the few who understand the Palestinian problem and express some sympathy toward it.

Question Do you give up all hope of changing the U.S. position? If so, why does the PLO not abandon all efforts to effect such a change?

Answer First, let me tell you that political struggle is an exchange of words, exactly like armed struggle is an exchange of bullets. Let me admit also that the balance of power in our region is the decisive factor in victory for any party. We, the PLO, believe in the struggle on all fronts: military, political and popular. We also believe in the weight of the international factor. Accordingly, political action is an important pillar in our struggle, especially in the international field, and particularly in the United States, which has been monopolized by Zionist propaganda. Had we been struggling in vain, my U.S. visit would not have stirred up over 20 Zionist organizations for 3 weeks to assail the PLO and my U.S. visit.

Of course, I am under no illusion that we can, even with all the Arab support, change U.S. policy through talk and information. This is impossible, due to the strength and quality of Zionist pressure in the United States. However, we can change American policy while we are here in our own land. This can be achieved through pressure with our strategic, economic, oil and financial assets. A decision to halt oil, increase its price or reduce its production will prompt every U.S. citizen to raise his or her voice asking the reason behind such a decision. When they know that their government's completely partial position toward the Arab's enemies is the reason, I feel certain that they will pressure their government and force it to change its policy. This was part of what I said in my lectures to their educated people, professors, businessmen and others interested in the Middle East.

Question Were they convinced?

Answer Who do you mean? The United States is a vast and complex world. The U.S. society is almost a unique one. Reaching the American people is an extremely difficult matter. While in Europe, for instance, there are political parties, popular forces and trade unions through which one can reach the people, in the United States television is about the only media by which to achieve such an objective, and it is controlled by a limited class, whose tie to the Zionist lobby is very strong. Accordingly, contacts

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

with universities and cultural institutions are an important channel to a vital segment of the American people. This is especially true since universities, and particularly the prestigious ones, are significant tributaries to U.S. decision making. We should not forget that a number of university professors assume high offices, such as Kissinger and Brzezinski, and those aspiring to such positions are numerous.

Back to your question, it is always possible to find in educational circles some who share the Arab point of view. During my visit I met professors and intellectuals who are in this category, some of them are even "Jews."

However, these groups differ from the administration and its circles. The official segment is not yet convinced of our point of view, nor does it want to be convinced, for the simple reason that it does not perceive any interest in changing its present policy. It is unfortunate to hear a senator or a congressman saying, "You are right. However, why do you ask me to change my position and threaten my electoral interests, when the U.S. interests in the Middle East are secure and under no threat?"

The educated people who have no official position can contemplate the medium and long-term developments in the Arab world, while U.S. officials are interested only in opposing such developments in the ugliest and most naive ways, such as the secretary of energy or secretary of defense urging the government to adopt a policy of violence and threats.

Question How do you evaluate your meetings at the universities and institutions in which you talked, the atmosphere of the meetings and the types of questions asked?

Answer Before I comment on your question, let me reiterate the significance of these meetings, since they are the first with a PLO official. With the Zionist enemy still portraying us as terrorists, the significance multiplies, since to be invited to talk at universities of this caliber is an indirect admission that the portrayal is a false accusation.

We should also realize that despite the intensive and pervasive Zionist pressure, there are in the United States those who oppose Zionism, imperialism and aggression. They are spread throughout the educational circles since the Vietnamese war. Talking with these people, giving them the right information and undisputable facts tends to strengthen their positive attitudes toward us, and is to be reflected in what they publish in magazines and other scholastic and cultural bulletins. Their impact on public opinion cannot be underestimated.

For instance, at Columbia University, I met those who shared my views and analysis and recognized our people's incontestable rights. On the other hand, I met a history professor who was so enraged by what I said that he stalked out of the hall, saying "Which Palestine and Palestinians are you talking about? Thousands of years ago there was a land called Palestine and Palestinian people, they are all gone." So you see I met the extremes.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

At Harvard, where Israeli students tried to stir trouble but were silenced by Arab students, I met Stanley Hoffman, known for his effective political writings. He acknowledged before the audience that he shared my views regarding the Palestinian people's rights to self-determination and establishing its own state, however, he assailed what he called "terrorist action."

At Princeton, Dr Richard Falk, an authority on international law, presided over the meeting. He is one of those who supported and predicted the Iranian revolution. He stated that he and the audience benefited from the discussion and felt that Americans should try to change their government's attitude.

This was the case in almost all lectures. However, the debate revolved around the three following issues:

- (1) What they refer to as Palestinian "terrorism"
- (2) The peace process resulting from the Camp David accord
- (3) The PLO's aspirations

Question Can you discuss each of the points in some detail?

Answer Debates were conducted as follows: I talked for 30 to 40 minutes. This was followed by a period of questions and answers for 2 or 3 hours.

In my opening statement, I always emphasized the following:

First - The Palestinians, due to what they have been experiencing for over 50 years, are the most interested party when it comes to the cause of peace, since peace means the end of suffering, homelessness and struggle. It means a normal and free life like other people's. It is a matter of life and survival, not a political maneuver to gain re-election to the presidency or to solve a crushing economic crisis. It is survival and the beginning of a normal life, long yearned for by our people.

Second - To defend "peace" as a human ideal and noble aim for all peoples would be hypocrisy and deception unless we simultaneously defend another human value and universal idea, namely, "justice." Peace without justice is capitulation. What too, place at Camp David was not peace, it was capitulation. It will not last long, and conditions will explode anew. Imposed peace, through force, collusion and secret alliances against the peoples of the region will not last long.

Third - I endeavored to emphasize that we in the PLO, as the Palestinian leadership, despite our conviction that armed struggle is the guaranteed way to achieve our national objectives, have not discarded the political alternative. Our struggle in the UN and our support for the General Assembly's resolutions regarding the Palestinian problem indicate clearly our readiness

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

to accept a just solution through political and diplomatic efforts. We have stressed the fact that we consider the UN an organization competent to convene all parties to the conflict and to find a formula which would guarantee peace and justice as understood by the international community.

Following this introduction, I would discuss the topic of the hour, the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty and the Camp David accords, and explain in detail our opposition to them, discussing each article as listed in the text.

No Zionist or friend of Israel was able to refute our arguments against the Camp David accords due to its criminal injustice to our people. Consequently, comments revolved around secondary issues in an effort to steer the lectures away from their proper course.

For instance, "terrorism," the issue blown up by the U.S. media, was brought up at all meetings. I recall that in one of the lectures, a fellow brought up the explosion of a bomb in a Tel Aviv market. The press and broadcasts had propagated the news. However, the next day no mention was made of it because Israeli planes were bombarding refugee camps in Lebanon. Thus, I stirred the matter by asking:

Why do you denounce terrorism when it explodes a bomb in a garbage can, but do not do the same when it drops napalm and cluster bombs from U.S. made planes? If it is a matter of means, we would welcome any type of planes you might like to offer us.

I constantly maintained:

that war is terrorism, and terrorism is a human tragedy. However, instead of shedding tears and displaying grief, we should eliminate the causes of war. To deny the rights of a certain people is sure to lead to war, fighting and destruction. There should not be a double standard for terrorism. We must eliminate the causes of terrorism by recognizing the rights of our people. This is the right path to peace. To deny the Palestinians rights to their land, to self-determination, to keep them in exile and to ask them to keep silent is an impossibility, rather it is hypocrisy itself.

As to the Camp David peace, there are 10 reasons why we oppose it. Each is a sufficient cause. They are as follows:

- (1) The first is elementary. It stems from our right and duty to refuse any political project, bearing on our destiny and future, which was formulated without our participation and approval.
- (2) The accord did not mention Zionist evacuation of lands occupied since 1967, which is contrary to the well-known Resolution 242.
- (3) The referred to autonomy is a flagrant lie aimed at legitimizing permanent occupation of our land and permanent exile for our people.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

(4) The so-called "Palestinian participation" is another glaring lie, because the texts are clear, participation is imaginary and has no practical value.

(5) There is no reference in the accord to Arab Jerusalem. There are no future negotiations about it. Jerusalem has been dedicated as Israel's capital despite all the letters exchanged for local consumption.

(6) The "legitimate rights of the Palestinians" referred to in the accord have no value because there is no agreement on what is meant by legitimate rights. The official U.S. concept does not encompass the right to return, to self-determination and establishing our own state. While the Israeli concept is clear and insolent. It separates the people from the land. Thus, Begin stated in the Knesset that: "the inhabitants may have individual right, however, the land shall remain under Israeli control."

(7) The accord refers to Palestinian "elections" without mentioning an international organization to supervise them. Instead, it stresses that the elections will take place under Israeli control.

(8) The accord does not refer to our people living in exile nor those suffering as second class citizens inside Israel, which means maintaining present conditions indefinitely.

(9) The accord did not halt the establishment of settlements in occupied territories, which shows that there is general collusion to Zionize what is left of Palestine and change the West Bank into ghettos to be blotted out through lack of water and arable land.

(10) The accord forbids those who left the West Bank and the Gaza Strip during the 1967 war from returning to their homes. This is despite the fact that the UN stresses year after year the right of those who left in 1948 to return to their homes.

The above sums up our stance of the Camp David accords and the reasons for our rejection of the Egyptian-Israeli-American peace treaty.

At the end of each lecture I used to say that the only way out of the crisis which threatens the region is the return to the UN and the participation of the international community, especially the two super powers, in a solution based on UN resolutions formulated in various ways, however, guaranteeing the rights of all to survival, security and the Palestinians' national rights. I added that the United States was the only obstacle to the return to the UN and its veto obstructed all the balanced projects submitted to the Security Council by the non-aligned countries, in an effort to solve this chronic problem for over 30 years.

In conclusion, I would like to say that the success of the politician and the media man is determined by the "action" in the field of struggle. The task is quite difficult when the man in charge is an Arab, the milieu is the United States and the problem is Palestine. However, we have abundant national assets, which we seldom know how to take advantage of.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Organizations Protest Restrictions

Paris AL-WATIN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 27 Apr-3 May 79 p 33

/Text/ State Department restrictions on al-Hut's U.S. visa have angered a number of U.S. organizations. The following five, the American Ramallah Union, Society of American Graduates of Arab Universities, the National Society of Arab Americans, the Palestinian American Congress, and the Palestinian Human Rights Organization, convened in Washington and issued the following communique to 10,000 citizens and 500 American papers:

"On 31 March, Shafiq al-Hut, director of the PLO office in Lebanon, entered the United States with a visa restricted to 21 days and forbidding him to come in contact with the press.

In his testimony before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee on 11 April, Secretary of State Cyrus Vance stated that "the Administration granted al-Hut a visa in accordance with the U.S. commitment to the freedom of exchanging ideas and information."

However, the restrictions on al-Hut's visa contradict the 1st Amendment regarding the rights of the American people to listen to others. This is a basic need in order to be able to discuss important political problems.

In an editorial dated 12 April, the WASHINGTON POST said:

"It is a shame that as American citizens who wanted to listen to Shafiq al-Hut, we had to be part of the silence conspiracy as a price for talking with him. Allowing foreigners to meet with ordinary citizens in order to acquaint them with their point of view is not a political matter. It is related to American values and rights."

Accordingly, we request the State Department to cancel its restrictions on al-Hut's visa and to extend his stay so as to enable the American people and press to listen freely to him and to report his views.

We ask the friends of the Palestinian people to contact Cyrus Vance and demand removal of these restrictions and to extend al-Hut's stay an additional 3 weeks.

We also ask to contact all social and educational brotherhoods, religious associations, the Bar Association, universities and colleges, to achieve the same.

Under Secretary of State Sandoz met with a delegation representing the five organizations and tried to explain to them the reasons behind the U.S. attitude and the attack launched by the Zionist lobby on the State Department as soon as the visa was granted.

COPYRIGHT: 1979 Al-Watan Al-'Arabic

9298

CSO: 4802

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

ALGERIA

AGREEMENT FOR EXPLOITATION OF GARA-DJEBILET IRON MINES SIGNED

Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 27 Apr 79 p 1049

[Text] A contract in the amount of 33.5 million dinars, concerned with exploitation of the iron deposits of Gara-Djebilet (in the extreme south-west of Algeria in the Tindouf region), between the Algerian National Iron and Steel Company (SNS) and the Soviet V/O Tiajpromexport was signed at Algiers on 14 April.

This contract, an Algerian source stated will make possible analysis of the various aspects of installing new iron and steel facilities in West Algeria along with the exploitation of the Gara-Djebilet mineral deposits. It will involve studies resulting in preparation of a technical-economic report. This agreement, that same source emphasizes, "will enable the Soviet partners to be prepared to enter effectively during the construction phases of these projects."

Financing of this contract to the extent of 30.6 million dinars is provided within the scope of Algerian-Soviet credit agreements signed at Moscow on 27 January 1976.

This matter may constitute a new reason for disagreement between Algeria and Morocco, L'OPINION, the organ of the Istiqlal, in this connection emphasizes that Gara-Djebilet, "is a part of Moroccan territory arbitrarily attached to Algeria by French colonialism and whose return to the mother country is still demanded by Morocco. Our country, which maintains excellent relations with the USSR, hopes to see Moscow reconsider this agreement," the newspaper adds, calling the contract "a new Algerian machination striving to damage the relations of friendship and cooperation between Morocco and the Soviet Union."

Incidentally, on 18 April King Hassan II received Enghini Arsenov, the ambassador of the USSR.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Last, in Rabat it is emphasized that the matter of ratifying the fisheries agreement between Morocco and the USSR signed a year ago has been "sent back for further study" by the Parliament. That agreement had been signed in the wake of the USSR-Morocco "contract of the century" for exploitation of the Meskala phosphates.

COPYRIGHT: Rene Moreaux et Cie, Paris, 1979

11706  
CSO: 4400



FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

ALGERIA

BRIEFS

PRICE SUPPORTS--The Algerian Council of Ministers on 22 April adopted drafts of decrees related to price supports for various items of prime necessity, notably cereals and oils, for which the 1979 appropriations bill provided the sum of 890 million dinars. To these measures, traditional in Algeria, was added a decree for price support of books in amount of 10 million dinars; this innovation, writes the APS [Algerian Press Service] commentator, "introduces the cultural dimension into the definition of products of prime necessity and mass consumption." The expenditures provided in the budget for all of these measures is the same as in 1978. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 27 Apr 79 p 1049] 11706

DISASTROUS FLOODING--Heavy rains fell upon the governate of Annaba from 15 to 17 April, compelling the evacuation of 550 families threatened by floods and slowing down the economic life of the city of Annaba where 150,000 persons of the southern districts were affected by the flood waters. The damage caused to agriculture is great; however, the water did not reach the danger level along the banks or at the dam of the Bounamoussa. Likewise at Constantine houses which were flooded collapsed. The cities most affected were El Khroub, 15 kilometers from Constantine, and Mila, where the old city is large. There, too, agriculture and stock raising suffered considerable losses. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 27 Apr 79 p 1049] 11706

ALGERIAN-ROMANIAN COOPERATION--A Rumanian delegation led by director general Valcin of Ronconsult was in Algeria from 8 to 10 April 1979 at the invitation of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research. The two parties, studying the new programs to be developed within the scope of bilateral cooperation, agreed upon the following actions: establishment of an agronomic research center for the future University of Blide; post-graduate courses in the exact sciences and in technology for Algerian students; realization of the university plans; and installation of a joint consultation bureau. On 18 April an agreement for construction of the "Le Fakiha" dam by a group consisting of the Algerian National Company for Large Hydraulic Structures and Rural Equipment (Sonagther) and the Romanian Romanergo firm was signed. This dam, with capacity of 100 million cubic meters--32 million intended for irrigation exclusively--will provide irrigation water to the Habra plain (governate of Mascara). [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 29 Apr 79 p 1050] 11706

<sup>12</sup>  
FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

ALGERIAN-GDR COOPERATION--While Mohamed Cherif Kherroubi, Algerian minister of education, is participating in the Seventh International Pedagogic Colloquium at Berlin (18-28 April) the vice chairman of the GDR State Planning Commission, Dr Albrecht, is in Algeria. In the course of a conversation with Brahimi Abdelhamid, ministry of planning and territorial development, there were cited exchanges of experiences in this domain, prospects for cooperation between the two central organizations, and, in general, economic, technical, and trade cooperation between the two countries. Dr Albrecht resumed discussion of this last subject with Abdelghani Akbi, Algerian minister of commerce. On 18 April a formal agreement for establishing cooperation between the two planning organizations was signed. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 27 Apr 79 p 1050] 11706

ALGERIAN-CUBAN COOPERATION--At the end of a 10-day stay in Cuba, Abdelmadjid, Algerian minister of urbanism, construction and housing, signed with his Cuban counterpart a formal agreement on the subject of construction, an agreement whose application will be studied by a group of Cuban experts expected in Algiers on 12 May. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 27 Apr 79 p 1050] 11706

PRESIDENT BENDJEDID ON PRODUCTION--President Chadji Bendjedid, addressing the members of the national secretariat of the UGTA (General Union of Algerian Workers), emphasized--we quote the APS [Algerian Press Service]--"that low levels of production, or any delays encountered in a given sector, would mean that the workers are not aware of their role in a socialist society." The day before the chief of state had declared to the general secretariat of the UNJA (National Union of Algerian Youth), "The time has come for each of us to have as his watchword 'duty before privilege.'" [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 27 Apr 79 p 1050] 11706

FOOD PRODUCTION GOALS--Abdelhak Brerhi, ministry of higher education and scientific research, on 21 April at the National Agronomic Institute of El Harrach (Algiers) inaugurated the second series of study days organized by the Institute's Department of Animal Production. The minister, emphasizing the strategic nature of agriculture and food products, brought out that satisfaction of national requirements is an essential element of independence. Now these requirements, for a population estimated at 35 million inhabitants in the year 2000 (it reached 16 million in 1977 with 63 percent less than 20 years old) can be quantified as follows: 60 million quintals of cereals, 6 million quintals of meat, 3 billion liter of milk, and 2 million quintals of fish. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 27 Apr 79 p 1050] 11706

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

SPANISH-ALGERIAN ECONOMIC COOPERATION--Trade relations between Spain and Algeria have been only rather little affected by the vicissitudes of their political relations. After a quite abrupt drop in 1976, the 1978 results show Spain in ninth rank among Algerian customers, just behind Morocco, and in fifth rank among its suppliers, preceded by France, the Federal Republic of Germany, the United States, and Italy. In 1978 Spain imported 165 million dollars worth of Algerian products, essentially petroleum products. Spanish importation is going to increase in the future with the commencement of the application of the contract signed with Sonatrach [National Fuels Transport and Marketing Company] which is to provide the Spanish Enegas Company with 4.5 billion cubic meters of gas annually. These deliveries are going to enable Algeria to overcome its trade deficit with Spain. Algeria in fact made 317 million dollars worth of purchases from Spain in 1978. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 4 May 79 p 1117] 11706

FOOD SELF-SUFFICIENCY GOAL--On 23 April, receiving the national secretary of the UNPA (National Union of Algerian Peasants), President Chadli Bendjedid emphasized at length the vital importance of agriculture, Algeria's permanent wealth in contrast with oil and gas. "The strategic objective," said the president, "is to realize the greatest possible measure of self-sufficiency insofar as food and agricultural products are concerned, and as a result the consolidation of national independence in the full meaning of the world." The means for accomplishment pointed out by the chief of state are: protection of agricultural lands, their better exploitation, and elimination of superfluous middleman operations in the commercial chain. Agricultural lands "must in no case be sites for construction of buildings of any kind whatsoever" and the Ministry of Planning will play an important role in this respect. As for the management of communal popular assemblies, reports of which will be made public, it will be possible to judge those elected "upon their practical abilities and not their oratorical abilities." [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 4 May 79 p 1117] 11706

DECENTRALIZATION--At Algiers on 23 April Algerian Prime Minister Abdelghani opened the sessions of the meeting of governors, the principal topic of which was decentralization. That, as the national constitution stipulates, means "a rational division of responsibility within the framework of unity of the state: to the communes and governorates, the solution of problems which are their own; to the central government the problems of national importance." The meeting at Algiers of all the country's governors to focus upon the general status of economic and social development is a significant innovation very much appreciated by the representatives of the state out in the country because they are thus able to have dialogs with numerous members of the government. We shall return to this subject. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 4 May 79 p 1117] 11706

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

NEED FOR VOCATIONAL SCHOOLS--The daily EL MOUDJAHID has echoed the uneasiness expressed at Oran over the confirmed delays in the vocational training sector. At present four centers, one for females, are accepting more than 1,000 pupils a majority of whom are excluded from the lycees and are re-directed into this type of instruction. Five other establishments, not yet built although included in the program of the second four-year plan which has ended, will bring the total number of pupils up to 3,140 including 540 girls. Such a number is far from sufficient for a governorate whose school age population is on the order of half a million: 23,000 pupils now from 15-17 years old will soon reach the limit of school age and possibly re-directed toward training schools which are already saturated. The reporter suggests that the communes be induced to undertake the construction effort, both to provide them with the specialized manpower which they lack and to relieve the centers which are open in the chief town. Agricultural centers would also be useful. [Text] [Paris MARCHES TROPICAUX ET MEDITERRANEENS in French 4 May 79 p 1117] 11706

CSO: 4400

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

IRAN

TIES WITH FRANCE BECOME STRAINED

Paris VALEURS ACTUELLES in French 21 May 79 pp 40-41

[Article by Michel Gurfinkiel]

[Text] Has France "lost Iran"? Not long ago, 8,000 French businessmen and technicians were living in the Pahlavi empire: 80 percent of them have left. The revolutionary government of Mehdi Bazargan is repudiating one after the other the contracts signed with Paris: the Tehran metro, options on the Concorde airplane, construction of nuclear power plants.

Thus France is being less well treated than other capitalist states such as the FRG and Japan which have kept their work sites and are even said to be in the process of obtaining new contracts. France, however, was the first country to come over to the side of the revolution which is now scorning it. At a time when President Carter was still affirming his support for the shah, when China, Saudi Arabia, Great Britain and Egypt were reiterating that the world needed a stable Iran, the French government was giving asylum and protection to ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini, believing since the summer of 1978 that the shah's regime was doomed.

In the reform plan of the Quai d'Orsay which Jean Francois-Poncet recently presented, provision is made for a change in the recruitment of the diplomatic corps: fewer ENArchs [graduates of the National School of Administration], more Arabists, Russologues and Sinologues. As a matter of fact, the French diplomatic corps seems surprised by the reality of Islam.

Ayatollah Khomeini believes in good and evil. That should be taken literally. According to Moslem tradition, the holy man "demands good and punishes evil." The present Iranian government has a "ministry for the repression of evil," of which Mr Yazdi, who has since become minister of foreign affairs, was the first head.

When France was supporting the exiled ayatollah, it was on the side of good. That is a "natural" thing which requires no recompense. When the French ask the ayatollah or his ministers to show proof of justice or at least equity with respect to personalities of the old regime, as for example Amir

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Abbas Hoveyda, they are on the side of evil. Ten days ago the ayatollah told Eric Rouleau, special correspondent of LE MONDE: "France should not associate itself with the plots being hatched by other powers against the Islamic revolution."

More than 250 persons have already been executed in Tehran and in several other big Iranian cities following summary trials. The rate is 20 executions per week. Reportedly there are increasing numbers being put to death in the cities and towns of lesser importance.

Prosecutors: "having caused the people to be fired upon," "having tortured or having ordered tortures," "being corrupt," "adultery and bad habits," "having revolted against God," "Zionism." The accused are dragged before their judges: "an Islamic people's court" made up of mollahs and fedayin. They try to defend themselves. Without attorneys. They are sentenced and immediately taken to the execution site.

The Iranian revolutionary authorities give the greatest philosophy to these tribunals and to the fate reserved for "traitors" and "corrupt persons." Hoveyda was interviewed in his cell 2 days before his trial. He was photographed during that trial. After the execution, Western newsmen were even able to enter the morgue to photograph him. All that was "good."

Among the Iranian bourgeoisie, the ayatollah's Munichaeism is engendering fear. Bazargan has threatened to resign. Karim Sandjabi who in the old regime was chief of the liberal opposition has indeed given up his post as minister of foreign affairs.

Ruhollah Khomeyni in his own way has taken these criticisms and reservations into consideration. He issued an edict according to which death is the punishment solely for "serious crimes." At the same time, one of his spokesmen announced that the shah and his family had been declared guilty and that anyone could kill them. In Iran or outside Iran. (Mr Portillo's Mexico has given asylum to the shah and his family. In the face of Iranian threats, Mexico replied that its decisions were made in Mexico not in Iran.)

The ayatollah's power comes from God. No one but God can put an end to it. Several days after the assassination of one of his colleagues, the ayatollah Mottahari, by a group of Islamic dissidents, Khomeyni said that he was not afraid of being struck down in an attack.

COPYRIGHT: 1979 "Valeurs actuelles"

8143  
CSO: 4900

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

MAURITANIA

UNCERTAIN WHETHER NEW GOVERNMENT CAN MEET CHALLENGES

Paris JEUNE AFRIQUE in French 18 Apr 79 p 5

[Article by Abdelaziz Dahmani: "Climate of Unity in Mauritania"]

[Text] The new prime minister, Ahmed Ould Bouceif, having announced a simple and coherent program, has prevailed.

Since the release of ex-President Mokhtar Ould Daddah's former ministers and of Abdelaziz Sall, former chairman of the National Assembly, on Friday 13 April, after 9 months of imprisonment, their drawing rooms have been constantly full.

-- There are incessant comings and goings of visitors--which include incumbent ministers--embraces and moving reunions. For a few days they have again become the stars of the national scene. But the real winner is Ahmed Ould Bouceif, the new prime minister, who, after having experienced many troubled days, has succeeded in creating around himself a new climate of unity.

To mark the change, Ahmed Ould Bouceif has chosen as his target "the old regime which is none other than that of incumbent President Moustafa Ould Saleck," accusing it of having in its own turn dragged the country into "a state of total confusion," and of having revived "the demons of the old cleavages."

"I am having nothing to do with the former team," Bouceif said to me in a tiny office discreetly located near the presidency, some 20 meters from the presidential office. But the real seat of power is no longer in that presidential office where Moustafa Ould Saleck succeeded Mokhtar Ould Daddah on 10 July 1978.

However, the program of Ahmed Ould Bouceif and of his principal comrades-in-arms, like Lieutenant Colonels Ahmed Salem Ould Sidi, Mohamed Ba Ould Abdelkader, better known as "Kader," Khouna Ould Hidalla, and Ahmedou Ould Abdallah, for working toward peace is certain to meet with domestic and foreign opposition.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Youthful elements close to the Polisariat are denouncing the "re-plastering of the Rabat-Nouakchott-Dakar axis." And the Polisariat itself, in a declaration issued on Sunday 15 April, announced that a prior condition to any negotiation is the withdrawal of the Moroccans and Mauritaniens from Saharan territory.

This position does not overly trouble Ahmed Ould Bouceif. He finds it glaringly "illogical." It cannot be a final response. Is Mauritania prepared for a possible resumption of the war? "If we are pushed to the limit, if we are given no other choice, yes, we are ready," says Bouceif with an air of determination, all the while hoping to the contrary...

On his southern flank, Bouceif, meeting with Leopold Sedar Senghor on 9 April, has gained a respite in the ethnic dispute between the white and black Moors.

It remains to be seen whether the new Mauritania, product of the third change of government in 2 months, can meet the challenge.

COPYRIGHT: Jeune Afrique GRUPJIA 1979

9399

CSO: 4400



FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

SAUDI ARABIA

BRIEFS

FRENCH SERVICE EQUIPMENT--A French military mission will be dispatched to see to the repair of French-produced war materiel purchased by Riyadh in recent years. Lacking competent cadres and technicians, the army of Saudi Arabia does not provide regular maintenance for this equipment (AMX 30 tanks, armored cars, missiles), such that it is deteriorating in the storage areas where it is kept. [Text] [Paris VALEURS ACTUELLES in French 14 May 79 p 17] 5157

CSO: 4800

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

SULTANATE OF OMAN

ALLEGED EGYPTIAN TROOP PRESENCE ANALYZED

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 20-26 Apr 79 p 22

[Article: "Seven Thousand Troops in the Gulf Bottleneck; an Egyptian Umbrella For Sultan Qabus; the Omanis Are Strangers in Their Own Land; Mercenaries of Every Nationality and Color Are Led by a British 'Conductor'"]

[Text] Abu Dhabi--Seven thousand Egyptian troops in Oman now form the land flank of the sea-borne American work force in the Arab Sea and the Arab Gulf. But can the Egyptian policeman fill the void left by the Iranian policeman who has now retired to a Caribbean island?

This may be the question now being asked by the officials concerned with the Gulf's security and oil in the departments of state and defense in Washington, and probably in London too, as well as in the United States intelligence community.

After the withdrawal of the Iranian forces from Oman and the new Iranian regime's announcement that it was giving up the role of western policeman that the Shah had been playing, it became essential to look for another shah or another policeman to fill the void.

There are many possibilities in this connection. American threats of military intervention in the region were recently repeated, but it is certain that the immediate temporary solution was provided by secretly sending Egyptian forces to Oman.

Nevertheless, we have abundant information from Oman that Sultan Qabus does not have any faith in the ability of the Egyptian forces to provide the necessary protection for his regime and for the entrance to the gulf. Moreover, he is unable to meet the costs of stationing them from his oil revenues which are barely sufficient to meet other financial requirements.

All the Arab gulf states have rejected the American threat of intervention. The only one which has not spoken out is the Sultanate of Oman. Observers fear that this silence is a preparation and veil for an American landing operation in the sultanate which would be equivalent to a foothold and

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

starting point for a larger threat to the security and independence of the Arab nations and emirates of the gulf with the pretext of defending their regimes from Soviet or radical movement in the region.

At the same time gulf circles do not regard it unlikely that the Egyptian forces will attempt a landing operation on some of the islands in the southern entrance of the Red Sea under the veil of protecting the "Arabness" of this sea and making its entrance secure.

The question now is: Have Arab-American relations reached a critical pass? Do the recent American threats mean that the United States is prepared to unveil its plans openly with a direct provocation of the Arabs?

The coming days will provide the answers to these questions. But it can be said in advance that any American landing operation in the region will lead to negative Arab reactions, and probably Iranian reactions as well.

But where are the Egyptian forces? and what is the true internal situation in Oman?

Our colleague, Faris Bazzi, attempted to find the answers through a meeting he had in Beirut with Mr Sa'id Mas'ud, who is the foreign relations official in the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman [PFLO].

Mr Mas'ud emphasized that the Egyptian military presence there has become a reality. It has been entrusted with the defense of Ra's Musandam which overlooks the Straits of Hormuz through which an oil tanker passes every 12 minutes.

The Omani official estimated the size of these forces as between 5,000 and 7,000 soldiers and officers with all their equipment. He said that units of these forces have become concentrated in the southern area in particular, that is, at the base at Hayrut near the border with South Yemen, and in the north of the region of Sarfit which is near the border of the eastern district of Yemen.

#### The British Presence

Speaking about the British presence in Oman he said: "They are there from the head of the old man in the Ministry of Defense to a company commander, and from the higher organization in the Ministry of the Interior to the head of the guardhouse." He emphasized that the leaders of the army are English while Baluchistanis constitute 68 percent of the troops and lower officers. Omani Arabs constitute only 32 percent. They are joined by Asians who were expelled from Uganda by former president Idi Amin. Moreover, there are regular British forces on the strategic island of Masirah.

Sa'id Mas'ud said that British Colonel Denison, who speaks Arabic and has been in the country for 20 years, is considered Sultan Qabus's chief adviser on national security affairs. The main cadre in the Ministry of

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

the interior and the security personnel are composed of Zanzibaris who are led by British officers.

With regard to the American presence the PFLO official reported that the al-Masirah base, situated in the Arab Sea, is considered the contact point between the American forces at the Diego Garcia base in the Indian Ocean, the sea-born naval work force in the entrance to the gulf and at the al-Jafir base in Bahrain. He emphasized that the United States had recently transported advanced reconnaissance units to the island of Masirah following the downfall of the Shah's regime in Iran.

With regard to the activity of the PFLO, he reported that it had altered the strategy of its struggle and had restricted its activity in the Sultanate of Oman proclaiming that its main goal was to drive out the foreign troops. He acknowledged that the organization had faced a military setback in 1976 after it was cut off from its supply lines in South Yemen by Iranian troops.

Mr Mas'ud emphasized that the PFLO's line was now a "nationalist line concerned with progress and revolution." It has good relations with Iraq, Algeria and the PDRY, and its relations with Syria have recently improved.

COPYRIGHT: 1979 AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI

9123  
CSO: 4802

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

SYRIA

GOVERNMENT WARY OF ISRAELI, LEBANESE SURPRISE MOVES

Paris AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI in Arabic 27 Apr-3 May 79 pp 30-31

[Article by 'Isam Khayr-al-Din: "Syrian Calculations After Egyptian-Israeli Treaty: Damascus Does Not Expect War and Puts Wager on al-Sadat Downfall"]

[Text] Damascus is putting its wager on the downfall of the Egyptian regime. It does not expect war with Israel in the foreseeable future but is still taking precautions. Lebanon is no longer the sole Syrian concern or bleeding wound. However, Damascus is still ready to throw its weight behind Lebanese President Sarkis if he moves to take the initiative from the various parties to the Lebanese game.

Damascus is a crowded city that has abandoned its monotonous pace of life. Its population exceeds 2 millions currently. Modern buildings are rising in its commercial center and its public places are crowded with customers. The entire city is bright with lights and alive with activity until a late hour of the night.

As usual, the daily concerns of life and the living problems do not divert the attention of the Syrians from their original vocation: Politics. The Syrians are wondering today what will happen after the al-Sadat-Begin agreement, and then answer their questions by themselves. They expect numerous developments and surprises but they find it unlikely that war will erupt with Israel in the foreseeable future. Yet they are preparing, as their officials say, to confront any surprise Israeli move. They do not forget for a moment that their city is on the first frontline and that Israel overlooks this city from its advanced positions in Mount Hermon, positions that are located 45 kilometers southwest of Damascus.

Israel Has Licked Dayan's Statements

The statements of Moshe Dayan, Israel's minister of foreign affairs, on Israel's readiness to withdraw from the Golan in return for peace with Syria have been considered here as feelers but have not been taken seriously, especially since Begin and the leaders of the ruling Likud Bloc and of the military establishment have given the lie to Dayan.

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

Syria does not want a separate peace with Israel similar to that of al-Sadat. It considers the Palestinian issue an indivisible part of the Arab issue. But this does not mean that Syria is taking a rigid or inflexible stance toward the efforts seeking to bring about "real and just peace," as President Hafiz al-Asad has said.

But the talk about the Geneva conference has ended here. Syria no longer believes that the conference is the fittest path toward achieving peace. It believes that peace goes through the United Nations and with the participation of all the parties, including the Palestinian side that is represented by the PLO.

However, Syria does not expect this to happen under the shadow of the al-Sadat-Begin agreement and of the U.S. insistence on imposing similar agreements on the other frontline states. This is why Syria is devoting all its Arab efforts to establish firmly an Arab position of solidarity in the face of the treaty, and why it is engaging in active diplomatic efforts to persuade the world, especially Western Europe, that al-Sadat's treaty is not fit as a first step on the path of peace.

The wager on this downfall of the al-Sadat regime continues to be present here. As a result, the observer or the visiting journalist can notice the violent nature of the Syrian information and political campaign against the Egyptian regime. But on the other hand, there are no convulsive positions despite the feelings of deep bitterness caused by al-Sadat's approach, which has insulted the dignity of Egypt and of all the Arabs since the start of his "peace" initiative at the end of 1977.

Unity With Iraq

The other wager is on the unity with Iraq. It is no secret that President Hafiz al-Asad leads those who are enthusiastic for marching forward on this path. Unity is the strategic principle of the Syrian policy and is the alternative, even at the tactical level, to Egypt's "temporary" departure from the confrontation line.

But the secret that I can affirm is that the supreme Syrian leadership now has an Iraqi plan to achieve partisan unity, that Damascus received this plan several weeks ago and that it is currently the subject of deep and serious study. However, no political decision has been taken on this plan yet.

The Syrians feel that after the collapse of the southern front, Iraq has become the strategic depth for the northern front and that with its vast material and military resources, in addition to the intrinsic Syrian resources, Iraq can form the real support in time of peace and of war for a country that stands almost alone on the frontline.

Lebanon, Unbleeding Wound

Lebanon is still occupying an important place in the thinking of the Syrian political and military leadership, but is no longer this leadership's sole

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

preoccupation, as it was when Syria entered Lebanon in 1977. Damascus is approaching the Lebanese issue in a very calm and relaxed manner. President Sarkis' recent threat to resign has not, for example, evoked here the interest that it evoked in Lebanon.

The fact is that Damascus still feels that the Lebanese president is capable, if he wishes to, to take the initiative from the various factions. Syria, which had expected this as of the first days of Sarkis' presidency, is still prepared to put its weight behind him if he moves in the direction that imposes his prestige and authority and, consequently, the state's authority over all those concerned in a manner that safeguards Lebanon's unity, independence and sovereignty and that achieves social justice in Lebanon.

Lebanon is not a bleeding wound in Syria's side. But if it turns into one, then Syria is prepared to withdraw from Lebanon. The Syrian officials assert that Syria will not permit any of the sides involved in the Lebanese game to drag it under these circumstances to a confrontation whose timing Syria itself does not select. In this respect, President al-Asad has asserted that Syria has a quick plan to withdraw from Lebanon. But this does not mean that Syria will abandon its national responsibilities toward its twin sister. Syria has learned how to turn the game in Lebanon into a bleeding wound in the sides of those seeking a confrontation with Syria.

Interview With People's Assembly Speaker

Finally, perhaps this interview with Mahmud Hadid, the Syrian People's Assembly (parliament) speaker, will shed lights from a high official position on Syria's stances toward the changing conditions and the issues of the hour. Mahmud Hadid was among the first civilian elements to support the corrective movement led by President al-Asad in 1970 at the level of the party and of the government.

[Question] What, in your opinion, are the ramifications and complications of the Egyptian-Israeli treaty, and what are the practical steps required for retaliation?

[Answer] (He said while inhaling deeply from his cigarette) The most important of these ramifications, if they may be called so, is holding back 40 million Arabs from taking part in our battle against Zionism and the United States. There is no doubt that even though Egypt's ruler has succeeded partially, the nationalist forces in Egypt are rejectionist forces that are opposed to him. These forces stand with us in the trench of struggle to topple the treaty.

What Israel has gotten as a result of the Egyptian-Israeli capitulation treaty is what it demanded after the 1967 aggression. Despite the Arab defeat, Israel was not able to achieve this dream. What is surprising is for Israel to achieve the demands that it had been dreaming of after the October war, in which the Arabs scored numerous victories. This confirms President Hafiz al-Asad's statements that we entered the [October] war for liberation, whereas

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

others, meaning al-Sadat, entered it to stir up matters and to reach these results.

In the face of this situation, what is required is unity of the Arab ranks and Arab solidarity against the accord and against al-Sadat's serious inclinations. The Arabs must stand against these inclinations. What happened at the Arab summit conference and the conference of the Arab ministers of economy and foreign affairs in Baghdad after the conclusion of the accord, calls for optimism regarding the ability of the Arabs to use all their resources to safeguard what they have struggled for throughout the years.

Anwar al-Sadat came to bring back the foreign influence and to hand over Egypt to the Zionist movement and to Israel. There had to be a sincere Arab reaction, and we had to stand in the face of this phenomenon. The measures that are taken against al-Sadat's regime in this phase are measures against the U.S. policy in the area. Opposing this policy means opposing the Israeli plan. We cannot separate the action against al-Sadat's course from the action against the U.S. course and the Zionist aggression in the area.

No to Geneva Conference

[Question] Don't you think that the Egyptian-Israeli treaty has abolished the Geneva conference?

[Answer] I believe that the Geneva conference is useless in this phase. Participation in the Geneva conference means, as President Hafiz al-Asad has said, signing and blessing what Anwar al-Sadat has done. This is why the Geneva conference is unlikely. When Syria says it is unlikely, it means that the conference will not be held.

[Question] So what is the solution?

[Answer] The Middle East issue has become complicated since the conclusion of the treaty. It can be discussed only within the framework of the United Nations. The solution lies in presenting this problem in its entirety to the United Nations, which is the party most capable of discussing this problem.

[Question] There are Arab threats and U.S. counter threats. Do you think that the United States is serious about carrying out its threats?

[Answer] When the Arabs want to take a certain position, they take everything into account. The threats made by Brzezinski, U.S. President Carter's security advisor, or by other U.S. officials to interfere in any area where the U.S. interests are struck are idle threats. But when the Arabs decide, neither Brzezinski nor others can strike the Arab homeland. Brzezinski is fully aware of the seriousness of embarking on such an action.

[Question] But isn't it possible that an Arab-Israeli war will break out?

[Answer] We have entered several wars against Israel and we are in a constant state of war with it. Syria is in the front trench, and every Arab



FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

country is within this reach of danger. Nothing can repel this danger other than unity and more struggle, solidarity and constant vigilance.

Iraqi-Syrian Unity

[Question] There is almost unanimous agreement that Iraqi-Syrian unity is the answer to the al-Sadat-Begin treaty. Where have the talks between the two countries arrived in this regard?

[Answer] What is happening between Syria and Iraq at present is not just ordinary discussions. What is happening is a fundamental change in the relationship and a transformation of this relationship to the state of unity between the two countries. The subcommittees emanating from the Higher Political Committee are working in an organized manner and with rapid steps to achieve this goal. The discussions in these subcommittees are conducted with a high degree of objectivity and responsibility.

The unionist steps between Syria and Iraq are firm steps. We are working seriously with the Iraqi leaderships to achieve unity. Syria has drawn up a draft constitution for the unity and a structure for the regime in the united state. The letters exchanged between the two leaderships confirm the serious efforts exerted to achieve complete unity quickly. What I cannot specify is the time to declare unity.

[Question] What about Syrian-Jordanian relations?

[Answer] Relations between Syria and Jordan are normal. We have constant coordination. But what is of importance to us, to the Jordanians and to the Palestinians is to have a common understanding to confront the plot. This coordination is for confronting the challenges.

The separate peace accord has come at the expense of all the Arabs and at the expense of Arab dignity and the Arab people. King Husayn has refused in principle to deal with Israel and has rejected the Egyptian-Israeli treaty, which has come at the expense of all the Arabs.

[Question] What is your evaluation of the tour of 'Abd-al-Halim Khaddam, Syria's deputy prime minister and minister of foreign affairs, in Europe?

[Answer] The latest Syrian movement emanated from the opposition to the Egyptian-Israeli accord, considering that the United States is the planning head, that there had to be quick movement to explain the dangers resulting from the conclusion of the agreement, that Europe has real interests in the Arab homeland and that it is required to understand the dangers of the agreement to it and to us. There was understanding for our viewpoint, especially in France and Britain.

[Question] Do you think that the Soviet Union is serious in its support for the Arabs this time in the face of the U.S. plan seeking to liquidate the Palestinian issue?

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

[Answer] The Soviet position is a position of firm support and is reflected in the political and military backing given to the Arabs. It is natural for the Soviet position to be on our side for several reasons, including the fact that the United States is attempting to spread its influence over the area. We are against the spread of this influence, and so is the Soviet Union. The Soviet Union also supplies us with the weapons we need.

Detente Achieved by Adherence to Legitimacy

[Question] Let us turn to the Lebanese issue. It has been said that there is thought of withdrawing the Syrian forces from Lebanon shortly?

[Answer] Lebanese detente can be achieved by adherence on the part of all concerned to the decisions of the legitimate government and by implementation of Bayt-al-Cin resolutions. As long as there is cooperation between parties and Israel, there can be no national detente in Lebanon.

The Syrian forces entered Lebanon to protect it from partition, to stop the shooting, to impose stability and security and to bring back to it the normal life that existed before the events. Whether the stay of the deterrence forces is renewed or not, the Syrian deterrence forces present in Lebanon will stay there until this goal is realized. The legitimate government still asserts that it needs the deterrence forces.

[Question] Is a meeting expected to take place between Presidents al-Asad and Sarkis?

[Answer] Any meeting between President al-Asad and Sarkis is for consultation and in the interest of security and stability in Lebanon. It is natural for the two to meet.

[Question] There has been a lot of talk recently about a plan to resettle the Palestinians in Lebanon. Do the changes in the situation in southern Lebanon have anything to do with this, for example?

[Answer] It is impossible to resettle the Palestinians in Lebanon. Lebanon is an Arab land and its population lives on this land. Does resettling the Palestinians in Lebanon bring about peace?

The Palestinians want to settle on their land only. In Syria, there are Palestinians who have been living here since 1948. These Palestinians also want to return to their land every moment, and we support them in this. The fundamental issue is the issue of Palestine and it is the basis for any solution.

Issue Is Inter-Lebanese

[Question] There has been a lot of talk in Lebanon recently about the presence of misunderstanding between Syria and the Lebanese government over the issue of national detente in Lebanon. Is this true?

FOR OFFICIAL USE ONLY

[Answer] Syria is ready to carry out any action that creates the right atmosphere for security and stability in Lebanon. The problem is not a Lebanese-Syrian-Palestinian problem but an inter-Lebanese problem.

We deal with the legitimate governments in Lebanon and can deal with nobody else. The Phalanges and the others are a part of the entire Lebanese people and are represented by the Lebanese government.

[Question] You visited the Lebanese town of Zgharta recently and met with former Lebanese President Sulayman Franjiyah. Does the visit have political significance, or was it a courtesy visit?

[Answer] My visit to Zgharta was at the special invitation of former President Sulayman Franjiyah. During the visit, the issues of concern to Lebanon and to the Arab world and the ramifications of the Camp David conference and of the separate peace accord to the Arab and Lebanese situation were discussed. Our evaluation of the previous phase was clear. President Franjiyah is well-known for his frankness and for his courage in political action. His opinion is clear on all issues. He is against the separate peace with Israel, against the partition of Lebanon, against the elements cooperating with Israel and for Lebanon's unity and stability within the framework of the Arab family.

[Question] Does the Syrian People's Assembly play a distinguished role in this phase?

[Answer] The Syrian People's Assembly has tasks that are similar in principle to those of all the people's assemblies and chambers of deputies in the world. But in Syria, this assembly has a special task other than that of legislation. This is a political task through which the assembly works to unify the Arab political activity. The other role of this assembly is the social role. The assembly tries to have a role in Syria's economic and social life. It takes part in exposing the mistakes and in correcting these mistakes. It is natural that mistakes exist, because Syria is rising socially and economically.

COPYRIGHT: 1979 AL-WATAN AL-'ARABI

8494

CSO: 4802

END